



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

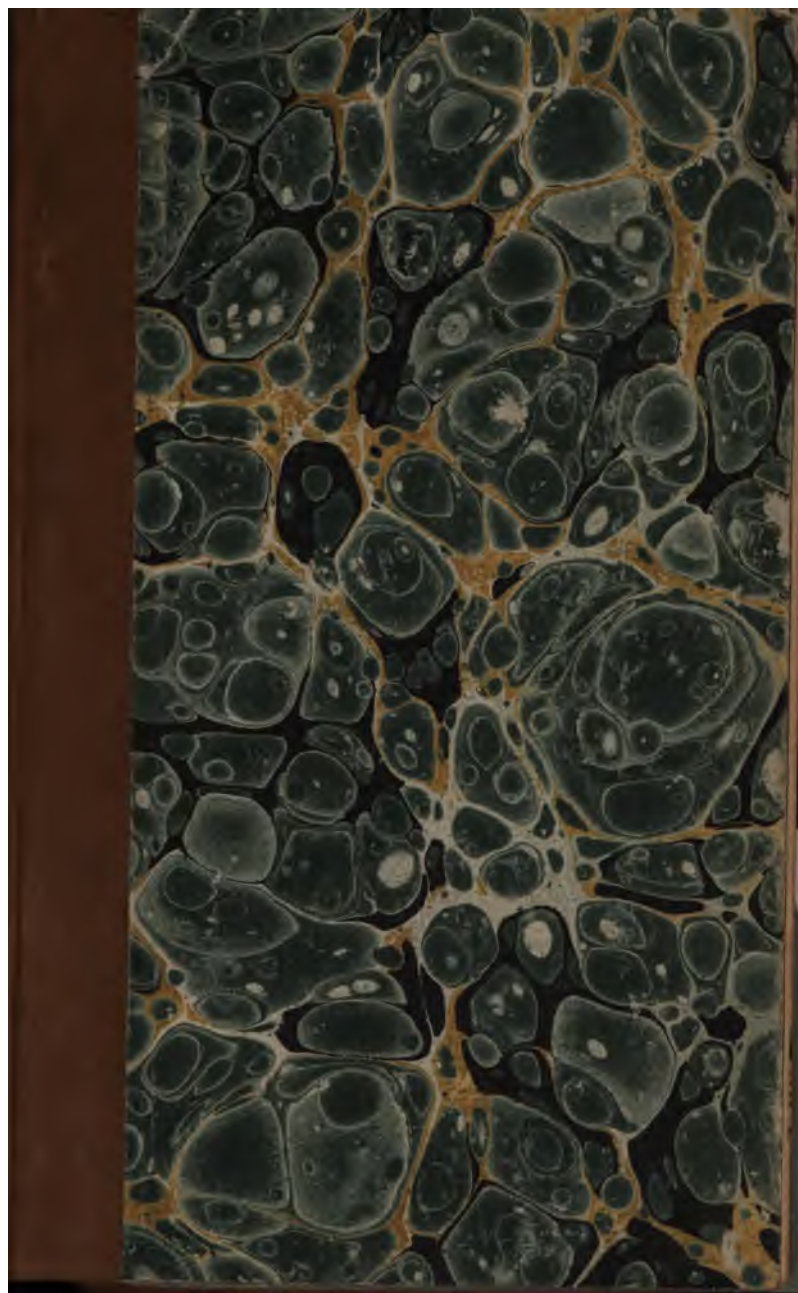
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



41.

488.



600031243J





DEDICATED BY PERMISSION TO THE BATH CHURCH
OF ENGLAND LAY ASSOCIATION.

REMARKS
ON
CHURCH RATES
AND THE
ROCHDALE CONTEST,

ADDRESSED TO ALL ENGLAND, AND ESPECIALLY TO
MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE.

BY J. E. N. MOLESWORTH, D. D.

VICAR OF ROCHDALE.

"He had a right, if he pleased to appeal as he did (and as on my suggesting the *weakness of the cause* which it *shewed* he asserted he would do) to the *passions* of the people. He takes his course, I take mine. I will appeal to the REASON AND RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES of the people, not to their *passions*."

Vicar of Rochdale's address to his Parishioners.

Rochdale :

PRINTED AND SOLD BY T. HOLDEN, MARKET-PLACE;

London :

RIVINGTON'S; J. BURNS; AND WHITTAKER & Co.

T. SOWLER, MANCHESTER;

AND ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1841.

Price Ninepence.



488.

CONTENTS.

Dedication.

Preface.

Section I. General Remarks on Church rate and Conscience.

Section II. Arguments for and against Church rate.

Section III. The Rochdale contest.

DEDICATION.

To the members of the Bath Church of England lay Association.

GENTLEMEN,

In dedicating these pages to you, I have had in view two purposes, of which, if you consider one more personally complimentary, you will, I am sure, find the other more important to the cause you have espoused. First I desire to offer a sincere, though humble, testimony to the *noble lead*, you have taken, and to the indomitable zeal (though under adverse circumstances) you have displayed in defence of Your Church. In this however I dare not praise you but as a faithful Churchman. I cannot offer you other commendation than that which ("*unprofitable servants*" as we are) a gracious Master in *mercy* concedes to us, when we have only done that, which it is "*our duty to do.*" My commendation is only comparative. Some do their duty less, and some more. But *EVERY Churchman*, be he *Layman* or *Clergyman*, is bound to *defend his Church*.

Secondly. I wish to direct public attention to your example, for the purpose, not only of encouraging them to follow your footsteps, but also of awakening them to a sense of the *yet greater* exertions, which, from the aspect of the times, and the doings of our enemies, it may be expected that the insulted laws, and persecuted Church, may need from all faithful, and religious men, who hold the chief truths of the Gospel.

For several years the Government has contemplated with helplessness, or indifference, if not with complacency, the clamour, the collections, the conspiracies, of the enemies of the Church, to obstruct the course of long established Law, and to intercept, by force, or fraud, the time honoured tribute by which England proclaimed herself a *CHRISTIAN NATION*; and her many Churches, kept in repair by *national* support, have held out to every poor man the blessed invitation of the Evangelical Prophet—

"Ho! every one that thirsteth! come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money."*

Harassed by her enemies, deserted by her professed Protectors, the Church has meekly appealed to the Legislature and the Government to uphold her in her obedience to the Law; but she has appealed in vain. She has been met on the one hand with coldness, "heavy blows, and great discouragement." Into offices if not of ecclesiastical, at least enabling the officers to act against the Church and all religion, *bitter and reckless enemies* of the Church have been introduced, merely to satisfy political partisans; and even in the *commission of the peace* are placed (nay preferred) the opponents of the *Law* of Church rates. On the other hand Church rate abolition societies, and other societies raising subscriptions, and carrying on in all parts of the kingdom schemes to injure the Church, have multiplied. The forbearance (may I not almost say *apathy*) of Churchmen has emboldened them. Organized opposition to the law is openly carried on—funds are supplied—Clergymen are dragged into the turmoil and brutality of polls, and expected to perform the duties of a returning officer, in circumstances which might puzzle even a barrister—Churchwardens are plagued with litigation and expence of every kind.† This cannot go on. If the

* ISAIAH, c. LV., v. i.

† Take, as a specimen, this hand bill recently issued at Rochdale, "CHURCH RATE.—The Anti-Church rate Committee are informed that certain Persons are going about attempting to impose upon the Public a paltry and shabby Tax, under the name of a CHURCH RATE, and even threatening Legal proceedings, if it is not paid. The public are hereby informed that NO CHURCH RATE HAS BEEN GRANTED, and none can be legally demanded; and all who prefer honest voluntary payments to the unjust exactions of the Act-of-Parliament-Church, are advised to refuse Payment of this illegal Tax. Pay no attention to threats. If proceedings be commenced against any party for non-payment of this Vicar-made rate, they are requested to make the circumstance known to the Anti-Church rate Committee.—Rochdale, Nov. 13th, 1840.—WRIGLEY, PRINTER, YORKSHIRE-STREET, ROCHDALE."

It may serve to show the friendly disposition towards the Church of our Queen, entertained by her ministers and their supporters; when it is known that the printer of this, and most other abusive placards against the Vicar and the Church, has recently been appointed Postmaster of Rochdale.

legislature will not interpose, the Church must defend herself. *Associations* for her *destruction* must be met by *Associations* for her *defence*. Let the conspirators against her be assured that, though they may annoy the Vicar of Rochdale, may excite deluded multitudes in populous towns to afford them partial triumphs, and annual saturnalia of blasphemy and profanation in God's House; though they may, by their Committees, their subscriptions, and political cabals, overawe or purchase a feeble or reckless Cabinet—THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND WILL NEVER DESERT THEIR NATIONAL CHURCH. They are already roused; associations such as yours with more *decided* organization, *larger funds*, and *more general* support, will rise up to meet the assailants with their own weapons, and confront the conspirators till they compel either them to desist, or the Government and legislature to interpose, and remove the necessity for these conflicts. The demand for such a movement among the Laity has arisen in London and elsewhere; and the time has arrived when the peaceful can no longer discourage it, nor the cautious refuse to support it. On the heads of the agitators of *political* dissent be the consequences of provoking it. The example you have set, that the Laity as well as the Clergy constitute the Church, and are in duty bound to uphold it, affords good proof that you will not only not be wanting to greater emergencies, as they arise, but that you will lead others to "go and do likewise." With respect, and earnest sympathy in the great object of your association;

I remain,

Gentlemen,

Your Faithful Servant, and Fellow-labourer,

J. E. N. MOLESWORTH.

PREFACE.

I have reserved my observations on the Rochdale contest till the meeting of Parliament, both hoping that, after the excitement of the contest was over, the "still small voice" of reason might be heard, and desiring, that the legislature might be urged to interpose, and put an end to the conflicts. I ask no man more, than I am ready to do. I ask him only to *obey the law*—and, if we differ upon the *policy* or *equity* of a law, to submit our different views to the decision of the *proper tribunal*—the *Legislature*. I am always ready to yield cheerfully to that decision, and equally ready, to oppose the decision of mob dictation, and vindictive or pettifogging litigation, and conspiracy.

While the matter was before only the Parish, I touched as little as possible on the *equity* or *policy* of the law of Church rates, because that was a point for the decision, not of the *Parish*, but of *Parliament*. As I now appeal to *Parliament*, I enter freely into the *equity* and *policy* of that Law, supporting my opinions by such arguments as I think fit. If, in those arguments, I give pain to any *conscientious* dissenter, I shall be sorry. But I cannot, from fear of so doing, sacrifice the *cause of truth*. If that cause

be in danger, no matter whether through wickedness or weakness, through treachery, or ignorance, it must be vindicated without respect of persons. If a man set up either dishonest, or absurd pleas, the dishonesty, or absurdity must be exposed without ceremony, and in plain terms.

I wish to be clearly understood, when I use the general word, dissenter—as being sensible of the distinction between the *political* agitator, and the *sincere*, though mistaken dissenter—but I cannot always, in my notices of the plea of *conscience*, *verbally* mark that distinction. I respect conscience even in error, but I cannot spare to expose the error. I also guard against the misrepresentation of those who, to excite resentment against me personally, instead of meeting my arguments, falsely state that I represent the opponents of Church rates *generally* as *infidels* or *revolutionists*. I do no such thing. I describe them as *leagued* with infidels and revolutionists, against a Christian Church; and the triumph they desire, as one which would be a triumph to infidels and revolutionists. This ought to induce them to pause, and suspect whether the triumph can be one, at which a *christian* and a *patriot* ought to aim.

I have shunned allusion to individuals, unless where defence from personal slander rendered it unavoidable; and even then I have said as little as possible.

Personal calumny has been profusely showered on me, especially in reference to my conduct during

the poll. But *Church rate*, not *my character*, is the question which concerns the *public*. And, for my own share in the matter, I neither so distrust the strength of my own character, nor respect that of my calumniators, as to give myself the trouble of pleading to their charges. I know I can *live* them down. The people are generally just, and respect a straight-forward and consistent man, even though they differ from him. Under excitement they may, for a time, wrong or hate the honest—But in the long run they will generally do him justice. My arguments may be perverted or misunderstood, my motives misrepresented, but my *actions* will work their own way to Englishmen's hearts, in spite of railing demagogues, or artful misleaders. Though mistaken neighbours, or prejudiced partisans curse, yet will I bless, though they persecute and revile me, yet will I seek to do them good. This is a golden rule, which I have learned of the Master, whom I serve—I will try to practice it. By it I have prevailed before, and shall, probably through God's blessing, prevail again. If not, I serve and fear God—not Man.

Once more, earnestly and affectionately, do I entreat my neighbours and parishioners, to let me wash my hands of these painful divisions, and be at peace. In any decision of the Legislature I shall dutifully acquiesce. Any *personal* concession I can honestly make to quiet their conscientious scruples (even prejudices)---any triumph I can afford them over *me personally* to satisfy their real or fancied

honor, I will cheerfully submit to. But I will not sacrifice the *Law*, or the *Church* or *reason*. I will not be a party to either *violating*, or *evading* the law. Nor will I surrender to mob dictation, or conspiracies, or litigious persecution, the right and duty of every man to maintain the law by lawful means, and to vindicate its equity by fair argument.

As to the Church---from my youth up I have been, though unworthy, yet a steady and consistent member of it; for more than a quarter of a century a working (and till lately not highly paid) minister of it. In all stages I have loved her, and served her, with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength---I will not now take her wages, to betray or forsake her. Whensoever I feel, that I can defend her against inward or outward enemies, it shall be done firmly and faithfully, at any hazard and at any sacrifice.

A religious dissenter, beholding her holiness and usefulness, embodied his wishes for her safety in the language of inspiration---Heartily and humbly do I join him in his pious and patriotic prayer---

MAY NO WEAPON FORMED AGAINST THEE EVER PROSPER.

SECTION I.

GENERAL REMARKS.

Church rate is not necessary to the *existence*, but is plainly useful for the *diffusion* and *influence*, of Religion. If we desire the people to be religious, we cannot suggest any means more suitable to this end, than to multiply and maintain places, wherein they may hear the duties, and perform the offices, of religion. In this object the rulers, and the whole body of the State, as well as the Church, have an evident and deep interest. The piety and patriotism of both private individuals, and public bodies, has been directed to the increase of Churches. In the course of centuries upwards of 10,000 parish Churches have been built, and endowed by private persons, by Kings, and by legislative grants, but chiefly by the two former. The founders have renounced all property in them. They are incorporated, and set apart *for ever*, for the purposes of *national* worship according to the English branch of Christ's Church. They cannot again be diverted from these sacred purposes to profane uses, to gratify fanatical caprice, or greedy

speculation. Their uses are known, fixed, and national. These Churches, thus *freely* given and *endowed* for the National benefit, this Christian Nation has felt itself bound in policy, and duty, to keep up by a general and ancient charge upon the land and houses of the parishes, to which they are appropriated. And surely a good and righteous policy it is, not only as it respects the eternal salvation, but also as it operates upon the security, peace, and prosperity of the people.

For in these 10,000 National Buildings the word of God is read and preached—the sacraments of Christ's Church are administered—prayer is offered for the divine grace and guidance—hundreds of thousands of worshippers are congregated every Lord's day to hear, honesty, loyalty, purity, charity, and all the virtues, on which depend individual, domestic, and national, peace and happiness, enforced upon motives, and to an extent, to which no human laws can pretend.

The Ministers of these 10,000 Churches, though held up to the ignorant by slanderers as monsters of wickedness and folly, are known, and by all reflecting men acknowledged, to be generally men of education, and qualified by their acquirements and manners to sustain the quiet dignity of the pastoral office. They carry into sequestered districts the arts and principles of civilized life; superintend the instruction of the poor; spread the authority of religion among all classes; bring rich and poor together; and

set in motion, and administer, many charities. They commonly possess sources of income independent of their profession, and thus become channels of *distributing* property in unfrequented parishes. They also chain down a tenth of the produce of the soil, to be spent where it is raised, whereas the lay landlord, or impropiator, if there were no church endowment, might spend the whole in London, Paris, or wheresoever he chose.

These and manifold benefits undeniably result from the 10,000 parish Churches; and, though these constitute their *lowest* claims, they surely are highly deserving the consideration of any man, who is concerned in the welfare of his country or of his fellow creatures. But the *Christian*, whose views extend beyond this world, and regard the salvation of immortal souls in these Churches, recognizes blessings both temporal and *spiritual*, at which charity must rejoice, and which faith would not sacrifice, unless under the most overpowering necessity.

But, however great the religious and social advantages of these 10,000 Churches, they are *far* from *equal* to the wants of our immense, and hourly *increasing* population. A vast field remains entirely unoccupied. Thousands of the people of this professedly Christian Empire are without not only the invitation, but the *means*, of *assembling themselves* together to the Sabbath Worship. They are cast out a prey to the numerous seducers, snares, and temptations spread by ungodliness and disaffection

on every side. In this field the "*Voluntary system*" has not only been left *free* to do its *utmost*, but its application has been most urgently *solicited* by *Churchmen*, as well as dissenters. Nay more—it has been largely assisted, both under the Church and among the Dissenters, by the active and greedy *spirit of gain and speculation*.* The desire of the builder, the proprietor, or the popular preacher, to get good interest for his capital, has co-operated with the pious zeal of the Voluntaries to multiply both Episcopal Chapels and Meeting houses.† Yet, with the aid of this active principle, the "*Voluntary system*," worked both by *Churchmen* and *dissenters*, has proved itself unequal to occupy even the ground, which the NATIONAL CHURCHES HAVE LEFT OPEN.

Now notwithstanding the glaring, and practical proof of the insufficiency of the "*Voluntary system*"

* The object of the speculator is facilitated in the case of Meeting houses, which are not necessarily set apart (as the Churches are) for ever for divine worship, nor incapable of being subject to a legal contract between the proprietor and the Minister, by which the former as well as the latter may reap an annual profit from the receipts. Such profit is commonly reserved—and if the speculator fails, there are numberless cases, in which the unsuccessful conventicle has tried its fortune anew, as a theatre or an assembly room—Various specimens of this may be seen in "Maitland on the Voluntary system."

† Hence we find that in large towns and densely populated manufacturing districts the meeting houses are large and numerous: while in agricultural parishes, where the population is scattered, very few (excepting those of the Wesleyans) buildings or preachers are produced by the "*Voluntary system*;" and those only of the most wretched description. There the National Churches alone present any thing like adequate means of public worship and instruction.

to supply even this *part* of the people's religious necessities, a certain portion of the dissenters wish the *national* support to be withdrawn from these 10,000 Churches, and the *whole* field to be abandoned to the "Voluntary system," which has palpably shewn itself inadequate to occupy even the part which remains. They demand that these 10,000 Churches of the nation should be left to decay, and to the dispersion of their congregations; or at least deprived of a certain, and not burdensome, means of support, in order that they may be submitted to the, more than precarious, experiment of depending upon a system, which has proved itself inadequate to maintain what is already committed to it; and therefore cannot in reason be considered capable of undertaking more.

Out of this state of things arises the cry against Church rates. Men, professing zeal for the *spiritual* and *social* welfare of the public, either pretend, or believe, that they are called by CONSCIENCE, to join in that cry. And observe the means, by which their *conscience* would effect the stoppage of National support from these 10,000 Churches—not by *arguments*; not by *petitions*—but by *conspiracies*, by *terror*, by *calumny*, by *pettifogging evasions*, by *taxation litigation*, by *tricks*, to excite prejudices, and by the most *reckless and Godless* auxiliaries, These are the *means* resorted to by men professing so much piety, that the Church is not good enough for them, and such tender CONSCIENCE, that they cannot pay a

charge to which their property was subject before it was theirs, and which the Nation had appropriated to the Worship of God. These means are used by the forces of Dissent and tender consciences, allied with all grades of *anarchy, deism, atheism, and sensuality*. These motley allies march under the same banner—"TENDER CONSCIENCE." And our astonishment is not diminished at this extraordinary tenderness of conscience, when we remember that though Church rates have been paid from time immemorial, we never heard (as Baron Gurney well observed) of this *sore place* in Dissenters' consciences, till within these few years. And yet more extraordinary is it, that this tenderness of conscience should become so great, when *all restraints* upon dissenters *freely* preaching their own doctrines are removed; and when atheism and revolution are banded together for the subversion of both altar and throne.

Can this be conscience *properly speaking*? Is it not either hypocrisy or delusion?

It may be said the latter is to be respected—So it is—but truth is to be respected more. No one doubts but that among the murderous and mischievous fanatics, who followed Jack of Leyden—or among the demoniac blood-thirsty assassins of the French Revolution, who set up a naked prostitute as the Goddess of Liberty, *some* might sincerely plead "*conscience*." But are we to use any ceremony in dealing with such a plea, or yet more, are we for fear of offending the *sincere*, though deluded, to

shrink from exposing the *hypocrites*, who raise the cry of *conscience*, and use their deluded dupes as tools for their own envious or ambitious purposes? Are these men, whether impostors or dupes, to be quietly permitted to bear down the judgment, to overthrow the institutions, to libel the common sense of the nation, by making such a *conscience* as theirs the *rule* of its legislature? Are those, who would represent *national* support of *Christian temples* as a *deadly sin*, those who use such *means* and such *allies*, in assailing a *Christian Church*, are those to be palmed upon us as the *likenesses* and imitators of *Holy Martyrs* and *Scriptural Heroes*? Are these ostentatious resisters of the law—these vainglorious or pantomimic *manufacturers* of processions, parading through the streets to rouse the passions of the multitude—are these *publishers* of their stage effect prayers, hymns, and actings with the dupe, whose vanity or whose delusion renders him their tool—these puffers of *LAW BREAKERS* into *Martyrs*—are these *tinsel counterfeits* to be passed upon the English nation, as the *sterling metal* which endured the fiery furnace, or as bearing the impress of that *truth* and *humble fortitude* which awed the famished Lions and the furious Sanhedrim? Are these mosquito *consciences* suddenly hatched, amidst the fermentation of infidelity and political agitation, from the grub repose of centuries to *sting and vex a Christian Church*, to be compared with the consciences of *those*, who only *served God* as they were

used to do; who resisted the law only when it required them to renounce prayer to God; who suffered without clamour, or agitation, or ostentation; who neither contrived processions, nor descended to any artifices, nor even desired, to influence the passions of the multitude in their favour; who neither raised subscriptions, nor formed associations, nor abetted litigious and vexatious opposition to the due course of the laws—and who never refused tribute to whom tribute was due, nor could have thought of withholding a charge to which their property had even been liable before it came into their possession?

Such a pretence is insult to the common sense of the Nation. As a *friend* I warn the *really religious* dissenter to come out of them, that he be not partaken of their sins, and that he receive not of their plagues. I say as a *friend*—not that I would, in the latitudinarian and canting liberality of the day, compromise my own principles, and profess that I saw no difference between dissent, and obedience to that Apostolical commission, communion and succession, which our Church devoutly holds—nor that I would hold that there is no sin in schism. But I know there are *deeper* depths than dissent. I know that, under the existing state of the Church, there must be dissent. I know that many *sincere* and *pious* men have persuaded themselves that they are doing good service to God in being dissenters. I know, that, though dissent is condemned in scripture, there may often be many allowances in the sight of

a merciful God, when he shall judge dissenters; I believe that a blessing may attend the labours of such sincere (though in that point erring) men; and it can never be my desire that their respectability and really religious influence, should be injured. For the effect of that will be to bring many not to the Church, but to *no religion at all*. I say then as a *friend*—come out from that unhallowed crusade against the Church of Christ—join not the Godless, the reckless crew, who raise their voices and their hands against the altar and the throne—and who (as in my parish Church) have entered the house of God to desecrate it with filth, blasphemy and imprecations, and all under the plea of “TENDER CONSCIENCE.” Will not this recoil on the dissenters themselves? Can they thus “handle pitch and not be defiled”? Will not their congregations, thus brought to compare their *Conscience* with their doings, have their eyes opened to see the nakedness, which such a cloak should cover? Nay will not the dissenters themselves, thus dabbling in the practices of Atheism and sedition, at last fall into the vortex, and be overwhelmed in the destruction of their reprobate allies?

APPENDIX TO SECTION I.

I bring a few declarations of dissenters themselves, to shew that hatred of Church rate is not considered a point of *conscience*, or essential to sincerity in dissent. It saves me some trouble to take most of these examples from an excellent and well reasoned speech of Mr. D. Malins, of Birmingham, delivered in 1837.

“ Mr. M. was aware, however, that his opinion on the subject of religious establishments would have but little weight with Dissenters,—he would, therefore, refer to the recorded opinions of numerous eminent Dissenting divines concerning them, and he especially solicited the reverential attention of those Dissenting gentlemen who were present. Dr. John Owen, a Republican, when preaching before the Long Parliament, expressed himself on this point in the following terms:—

‘ Some think, (says he,) if you (the Parliament), were well settled, you ought not, as rulers of the nation, to put forth your power for the interest of Christ. The good Lord keep your hearts from that apprehension! IF IT ONCE COMES TO THIS, THAT YOU SHALL SAY YOU HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH RELIGION AS RULERS OF THE NATION, GOD WILL QUICKLY MANIFEST THAT HE HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU AS RULERS OF THE NATION. Certainly it is incumbent on you to take care that the faith which you have received, which was once delivered to the saints, in all the necessary concernments of it, may be protected, preserved, propagated, to and among the people God hath set you over. If a father, as a father, is bound to do what answers this in his family, unto his children; a master, as a master, to his servants; if you will justify yourselves as fathers or rulers of your country, you will find this to be incumbent on you.’

The Rev. Matthew Henry speaks thus:—

‘ Let us much more give God praise for the national establishment of our religion, with that of our peace and civil liberty.’

And again:—

‘ IT IS THE DUTY OF RULERS TO TAKE CARE OF RELIGION, and to see that the duties of it be regularly and carefully performed by those under their charge, and that NOTHING BE WANTING THAT IS REQUISITE THERE-TO.’

J. Flavel, a Dissenting minister, says,—

‘ What is the duty of political fathers or magistrates to their political children or subjects? It is to rule and govern the people over whom God hath set them with wisdom, CAREFULLY PROVIDING FOR THEIR SOULS in every place in their dominions.’

Dr. Doddridge remarks,—

'Some have represented all encouragement given to one religious profession, in preference to another, as a degree of persecution; but now, both a regard to the honour of God, and the good of society, which surely the magistrate is not the only person under no obligation to, must engage him to desire and labour that his people may be instructed in WHAT HE TAKES TO BE THE TRUTH.'

Dr. M'Crie, in concluding a logical disquisition on this subject, gives this opinion:—

'It is contrary to the rules of just reasoning to tell us that we cannot assert the warrantableness of the Magistrate's power about religion, unless we produce a positive institution of it, in the New Testament, if the whole word of God be the rule of our faith and practice.'

Dr. Dwight, an American Presbyterian minister, has said:—

'In the history of the globe, there is recorded but one attempt seriously made to establish a free government without religion. From this attempt has sprung new proof that such a government, stripped of this aid, cannot exist. Instead of being a free, just, and beneficial system of administration, it was more despotic than a Persian Caliphate, more wasteful of human life, with all its blessings, than an inundation of Goths and Vandals.'

Mr. M. proceeded to observe that he could furnish many other extracts from Dissenting authors, but he feared he should tire the patience of the meeting, and of his Dissenting friends in particular, he, however, begged the meeting to suffer him to read Mr. Cobbett's views on this point, which were contained in a passage no less remarkable for its descriptive beauty than for the justness of its conclusion; it ran thus:—

'The county of Suffolk is the crack county of England. It is the best cultivated, most ably, most carefully, most skilfully, of any piece of land of the same size in the whole world; its labourers are the most active and most clever; its farmers' wives, and women employed in agriculture, the most frugal, adroit, cleanly, of any in the whole world; it is a county of most frank, industrious, and virtuous people; its towns are all cleanliness, neatness, and good order, and what is the reason for this? THERE IS A PARISH CHURCH IN EVERY THREE SQUARE MILES OR LESS—and it is divided into parishes so numerous as for the people everywhere to be almost immediately and constantly under the eye of a resident parochial minister.'

(Here Mr. M. was interrupted by the cry of 'give us the opinion of some *modern* Dissenters.') Mr. M. remarked that he never heard of *ancient* Dissenters; *dissent was altogether of modern growth*; he nevertheless thanked the gentleman for the hint, and instantly adduced the speech of Mr. King, a surgeon and dissenter of Chelmsford, who argued in favour of national religious Establishments so convincingly that it appeared to satisfy even the *Dissenting gentleman* who put the question."

An extract of Mr. King's speech may give an idea of its religious feeling, truth and candour, I am sorry that I cannot give the whole.

"And now with regard to the act of injustice in compelling us Dissenters to pay for the support of a national religion; I am at a loss to know what is meant by it. Living in a country professedly Christian, we expect that the government will be Christian—and that they should consider it a duty to provide such religious instruction for the people as they deem most expedient—the best calculated to promote their eternal happiness. So far from Dissenters saying this is an injustice, I will say that the moment a government ceases to make this provision, it ceases to be Christian. It leaves the discharge of one of its first duties to others, and betrays the confidence placed in it by the friends of peace, order, morality, and religion. I am at a loss to understand how individuals can think it right to set up their own private judgment as to the payment of taxes for religious instruction; why they might, by the same rule, think it very wrong to pay any tax which had for its object the promotion of social order and the defence of the country. This is all involved in the same principle. That which demands obedience to one law, demands it to all.

"I will only say it is impossible to conceive of any measure more pregnant with mischief to the poor, than would be the abolition of the church rate, as it would deprive them of that legal right to accommodation for religious worship which they now enjoy at the expense of the state. The interests of the Church and the poor are so closely united by the wisdom of our ancestors that it is impossible to separate them. Of the truth of this any one may hastily convince himself; and it is impossible for any one to aim a blow at the institutions of the country without it being injurious to the poor. Let them look round and see to whom they are indebted for the public charities, alms-houses, and asylums; why nine-tenths of them originated in the liberal donations and contributions of churchmen. Let them look round and inquire where the men are to be found w^ho of late have maintained both in writing and in speeches, that all charities, public and private, are injurious to the morals of the country; and they will find them amongst those who oppose church rates, and try to persuade us, contrary to justice, not to pay these rates."

I have quoted on *other occasions* the speeches of other dissenters to the same effect, and could quote many more did I not consider that quite enough has been adduced to prove that I am justified in distinguishing between religious and political dissenters, and in affirming that the plea of *conscience* has no solid foundation—but is the fabric of hypocrisy, or delusion.

SECTION II.

THE ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST CHURCH RATES.

In the Rochdale contest I endeavoured, as much as possible, to confine the discussion to the duty of *Christians and members of society* to obey the law according to its *plain meaning and intention*. This question has no reference to the goodness or badness of the law; and this question *alone* is for the decision of *individuals and vestries*.

The question of equity, or policy, is for the decision of the *legislature*. A and B may take opposite views on this point---But it is not the province of A, or B to *decide* it. Both may support and urge their own views, by argument, or petition, but the legislature is the judge to decide between them.

As I am now addressing the public and the legislature, I enter upon the question of the *equity* and the *policy* of Church rate.

I will

I. State my reasons in support of the equity and policy of Church rate.

II. Examine the reasons which are urged against *it*.

THE EQUITY AND POLICY OF CHURCH RATE.

1. If it be equitable and wise to provide for the support of all other *national* establishments, civil or military, by a general charge without *regard to individual objections* against those establishments, so much the more equitable and wise is the same policy applied to a *religious* * national establishment; as the salvation of the soul is more important than the health of the body, and as the sanctions of religion are more efficacious, in securing the happiness of the community, than the terrors of the law or the sword. The acts of the state, as well as of individuals, ought to bear testimony that it is Christian---and fears, honours, and depends upon, God.

2. The usefulness of a religious establishment in diffusing the influence of those sanctions, has been shewn, and is unquestionable. Therefore nothing

* Let a dissenter—a *truly* conscientious dissenter, who could not suffer his sense of right and wrong to be borne down by prejudice, or political and party views to distort truth, be heard (if a Churchman may not) upon this point. His name is Maclean. He stood up to deprecate the unhallowed combination against Church rate at Eccles. Let his dissenting brethren be proud of such, and hear his words of truth and true wisdom.

“It is surely more *politic* as well as more *charitable*, to repair churches for the *prevention* of crime, than to build *gaols* and *bridewells*, and support *police establishments* for its *punishment*. I regret that our Dissenting friends, many of whom I sincerely respect and love, should place their hostility to this national contribution on *conscientious* scruples. I cannot call in question their sincerity, yet surely they must feel, that there is some *inconsistency* in appealing to *conscience*, against a *Church*, whose *doctrines* they believe, and whose ministers they respect, whilst they give *no voice* to their scruples against the national *support of Popery*. Their silence on the Maynooth grant has left them in a position from which, for their own sakes I should rejoice to see them *withdraw*.”

but positive *proof* that such an establishment is *forbidden* scripture, could justify a government in neglecting to support it.

3. The 10,000 Churches having been for the most part built, and endowed by the piety and munificence of individuals, and freely given for the purposes of National worship to the poor as well as the rich—the Nation need not grudge to support them, even, if Church rate were a *personal* tax.

4. But it is not a *personal* tax. It is in the *nature* of a *rent charge*, subject to *which every man*, from time immemorial, has *taken* the property rateable. To exempt purchasers or renters of property because they are dissenters, would be to give them a *premium* on dissent.

5. Church rate is an *equal* charge. If it *can* be said to *press* any one, who takes property subject to it; it presses *equally* and in *proportion* to the rateable property possessed. It does not squeeze or beg from the *poor* and *willing*, and allow the *rich* and *selfish* to escape. Whereas dissenting writers themselves complain, that under the voluntary system the poor pay too much, and the rich too little. If a poor man attend a Meeting house he will frequently have to pay more in six months, than he would at Church in six years. In truth Church rate does not press the poor, generally speaking, at all. They receive from the Church in Charities a thousand-fold more than they pay. In Rochdale the Church rate, against *which a resistance* so violent has been excited, is one

halfpenny in the pound--and that not on the full rent. So that a man *rated* (*renting higher*) at £10 a year, would have to pay five pence. Even this is usually paid by the *landlord*. The established Church has, therefore, justly been termed the "*Poor man's Church*." He has a *right* to enter and worship, without being *asked to pay*.

6. The "voluntary system" tends to depress the Minister, and to destroy his independence. Instead of being their pastor, he must often become the pander of their humours, or have his life made miserable by loss of income, by petty annoyances, and vindictive intrigues, and injuries. The precarious nature of his income prevents those from entering the ministry, who would give it that rank in society, which is due to it.

7. The CHURCH is the PROPER RECIPIENT of Church rates :—

BECAUSE it has from *time immemorial* been entitled to them.

BECAUSE it was so entitled before dissent (which is of *very modern origin*) existed.

BECAUSE—dissent is so undefined, so divided, and ever dividing, that it is *incapable* of presenting any tangible form for a National establishment.

BECAUSE *only* the Buildings of the Church are *for ever* set apart, and vested in persons corporate, for *national* worship, according to *known* and *defined* principles.

BECAUSE the Church can show an apostolic commis-

sion and succession ; and its authority thus conferred is supported by institutions, which render its Pastors independent of those, whom they are to *rebuke* as well as exhort.

BECAUSE—A Christian Nation, as it looks for the favour and protection of Almighty God, is bound to encourage and uphold that Church, in preaching and reading the word of God, and preserving “whole and undefiled” the great Christian verities committed to its keeping.

These two last, some Dissenters may meet with a sneer—but “whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear,” it is the duty of a member, and priest of the Holy catholic and apostolic Church to assert them.

DISSENTERS, OBJECTIONS TO CHURCH RATES.

1. It is asserted that the Scriptures do not *authorize* compulsory payment for religious establishments. If this assertion were *true*, it could not form the ground of conscientious resistance of Church rates. We have shown the useful purposes, which the state may thus promote ; therefore to justify resistance it would be not sufficient to shew that the word of God is *silent*, or *neuter* on the question. *Proof* must be given that the Bible *forbade*, or was *clearly* opposed to such a provision.

But the Bible is not even *silent** on the subject. It gives the *general* rule to “pay tribute to whom tribute

* See proofs of this in Section iii.

is *due*." The old Testament abounds with proofs of compulsory payments for the support of the temple of worship: and Jesus himself set the example of such payment.

2. The Christian Church in its infancy was maintained by *voluntary* contributions. But this is no *condemnation* of a *lawful*, and *national* provision for the support of *National* places of worship. The Church was then feeble and persecuted, and had no *power* to obtain such a provision. Therefore no *choice* was offered to the Apostles; they were *compelled*, by necessity to depend on voluntary offerings. Their practice implied no *preference* of the voluntary system, nor any *condemnation* of compulsory provision for the Church. It could form no *precedent*, for they were not *free* to *choose*. As well might it be argued that we must follow their practice in meeting in "*caves*" or "*upper rooms*" or at *midnight*, as they were compelled to do, in times of persecution. Any man of common sense may see that the Church from *compulsion*, not *choice*, depended on Voluntary offerings. As soon as it so increased, as to make Christianity the national faith, the Rulers of the nation held it their wisdom and their duty, to make *public* provision for *Public* worship.*

* St. Paul asserted the *right* of ministers to be maintained; and acknowledged the *objectionable* nature of voluntary support. by *foregoing* the *right*, rather than be *open* to the *suspicion* of serving them and appearing zealous, for the purpose of *inducing* them to *contribute*. To such perversion every zealous act of a Minister to his *voluntary* supporters is liable. His solicitude may be suspected to arise from fear of loss, or hopes of gain.

Indeed the tenderness of *conscience* respecting the scriptural lawfulness of compulsory support of religion seems to be of a very *convenient* nature---being sensitive *only* in *paying*, but as callous as the hide of a Rhinoceros in *receiving*, that support. For during *more than a century* the dissenters have annually *received* the "regium donum" (amounting to as much, or more, than they pay to the Church) without a single twinge, or wincing in the least. Nor, has even the grant to popish Maynooth, troubled them much. It is only to the Established Church, that this raw place on the tender conscience is turned.

3. The law is said to be unjust, and therefore to be resisted, which compels a man to pay for a church, which he does *not use*, and *disapproves*. If every man is to set up his scruples, and his likings, and dislikings, as the standard according to which a law is to be obeyed or resisted, what tax could be laid, of which such a principle would not justify the refusal, and raise plenty of claimants for exemption. A quaker might refuse to pay taxes for the army because he has scruples of *conscience* against *war*---a republican might claim exemption from taxes which support the *monarchy*, which he conscientiously *hates*---a man, who dislikes litigation, might refuse to contribute to the Judges and Courts. A smuggler might be excused taxes, because they maintain the coast guard, which he not only does not use, but cordially hates---a pick-pocket hates, in like manner, the *police*---in short, every man might find something,

which he *does not use*, or which he *disapproves*, and which is maintained by the taxes he is called upon to pay.

And here again the tenderness of conscience is amazingly *convenient*. Whatsoever qualms they have against themselves paying, they have not the slightest against making *Churchmen* pay, for what they disapprove. Witness the expences of those despotic abortions, the Marriage and Registration Acts---and the scandalous, unconstitutional, and obstinate attempt to force down the iniquitous objects of the one-majority Education grant.

4. "*My Kingdom is not of this world*," is a text brought forward to prove that it is contrary to Scripture, that the Churchwardens should resort to the legal means of compelling obedience to the Law, when men, under the shallow plea of conscience, think fit to resist it. Charity would willingly hope that this stupid perversion of Scripture might arise from gross ignorance; were not that hope cut off by its being repeated, after the *frequent* and *undeniable* refutation of it. The use of such an argument, after the notorious exposure of its falsity, shews a shameless and deliberate purpose of perverting Scripture, which cannot consist with the pretence of *conscience*. Jesus was falsely charged with a design of *usurping* the office and authority of the emperor---He *denies* the charge; and says "*My Kingdom is not of this world*," that is---I have no desire to *usurp* the Emperor's authority; for though I am a

king, it is not in a *worldly* sense, but in reference to a *Heavenly* and *spiritual* Kingdom. The kingdom I claim to reign over, is very different from Cæsar's kingdom. What, in the name of common sense, can this have to do with the lawfulness of Churchwardens compelling, as *all her Majesty's subjects* must do---and as the Law directs, *foolish*, or *wicked* people to *obey* the law, or to suffer the *lawful consequences of disobedience*? It has no more to do with the question, than with the Birmingham railroad. If it applied at all, it would apply not only to Churchwardens, but to *all Christians*---for to *all* it is addressed. And the conclusion would be, that *no* Christian must use lawful means to enforce law---and the law, and all its officers, would be for the *sole* benefit of *Atheists*, *Deists*, and *Idolators*. If it were not for the disgraceful dishonesty of the plea, it would be ridiculous. And here again we have a specimen how *conveniently* accommodating *tender consciences* are. Notwithstanding their eagerness to use this text against the officers of the *Church* applying lawful means of enforcing what law assigns to it; the dissenters have no scruples of conscience in resorting to law in defence of their *own* rights. Witness Lady Hewlet's charity, and the prosecutions their association has instituted on various occasions.

5. Dissenters say, that there should be perfect *equality* in religious matters, and no *preference* by the State. But surely, both the majority of the

Church, which exceeds not only every sect, but all sects put together, and its immemorial tenure of this national support do entitle it to some preference: more especially when it is considered that many sinceredisenters (*not political*) of all sects, and particularly of that large and influential body, the Wesleyans are not averse to it.

And is it justly to be termed a *preference*? Has the state made this a fresh law, *since the birth* of dissent, to *establish*, or give *advantage* to, the Church? No—Church rate, from ancient time, was assigned to support that Church, which adopted the State, rather than the State adopted it.

But, if there is to be no preference, why are dissenters to be encouraged by having their property cleared of a charge subject to which they took it, as all others did; and subject to which they *calculated* its value or rent? Or are they to have the preference of dictating to the legislature by conspiracies, clamour and violence, while the *arguments* of those are not to be listened to, who peacefully *appeal to law and reason*?

And what kind of equality do they demand? Is it to raise themselves in the scale of society, or in their pecuniary condition? To that the Churchman would not object—No, their equality is to pull down those they envy, and to sacrifice to their jealousy an establishment of which the blessings have caused the British Empire to be regarded as the most favoured of nations.

6. It is said, that the revenues of the Church, by better management, would produce a surplus fund sufficient for the purpose. This is not the fact. That a different distribution of the revenues (whether wisely or unwisely adopted) may produce a fund is admitted; but not a fund adequate for the purpose. And, whatsoever its amount, ample claims are pre-pared for its appropriation, in the increase of numerous poor benefices and the extension of the means and ministers of Public Worship.

7. The passions of the lowest and most ignorant are appealed to by sneers, and exaggerations of the wealth of the Church, or of some incumbents. As a body the Church is insufficiently provided for. If it be allowed that there are some valuable benefices, to which a few out of 10 or 12,000 may hope to rise by talent and exertion, how can this affect the duty of a Christian nation to maintain the national temples, or of Christian people to obey the law of the Land? Why is the Clergyman to be debarred from a hope of competence any more than the merchant or manufacturer? Or, because some merchants and manufacturers arrive at wealth, are we to argue that the laws and taxes, which protect the property of the whole are not to be enforced, till the profits of these more fortunate or skilful men have been redistributed, and all beyond a certain sum seized for public service? The idea is absurd. And be it remembered that the land and revenues of the Church, are not, like *those of other proprietors*, liable to be limited to those

who inherit—but are open to the competition of all classes, even the sons of Dissenters themselves. They may by honest zeal and exertion work their way to them—and many of the highest stations of the Church are filled by individuals who have [sprung from the lower and middling ranks. The son of a Dissenting Minister for example is now a prebendary of Durham, and an honor to the body to which he belongs: and many of our bishops and highest dignitaries have by talent and diligence raised themselves, from humble stations, to their present elevation.

These arguments may not be convincing to some, and I quarrel not with those, who choose to controvert them with reasoning, or by legitimate appeals to Parliament. What I condemn is not *argument* for the repeal of the law, but *resistance* and *evasion* of it, by those acts which the Rochdale contest, (to be described in the next section) too disgracefully exhibits as specimens of what “*conscience*” may be prostituted to justify.

APPENDIX TO SECTION II.

I subjoin here two or three authorities on the barefaced attempts to set up Lord Denman's Judgment in the Braintree case as an argument that there is no law for Church rates, and that where there is no law, there is no transgression. It will be seen in Section III, how the Bible directs all Christians to fulfil and obey the Law according to its plain *meaning and intention*. To get over this difficulty the *tender consciences* have been driven to the audacious assertion that, according to the above judgment, there was no law and no obligation on the Parishioners to provide for the repairs of the Church—Now for facts.

Lord Denman was not called to decide, whether there was a legal obligation on the Parishioners to repair the Church, but simply whether the churchwardens *alone* could *make* a rate, and *force* the parishioners to do, what was admitted on *all hands* to be their *duty*. Let Lord Denman in giving that judgment speak for himself—

“The law or doctrine that by the custom of England the inhabitants of a parish were bound to repair the fabric of the Church had *not been disputed*. By the civil and the canon law, the parsons had been bound to repair the Church, and that liability existed in all Christian kingdoms *except England*, where, by the parliamentary law of the country, the *parishioners* were *bound* to take care of the repairs of the Church. This was *clearly* laid down in *numerous authorities*. The period at which the earliest church rate was imposed had not been distinctly shewn; still it might be assumed that the expenses required to be incurred for the repairs of the church had *always been levied upon the parishioners at large*. That, indeed, was a matter which was treated as a *settled point* of practice and law.”

“The *wrong* was the *neglect* of the *parishioners* to afford funds for the repairs of the church; but the remedy to that evil sought to be enforced by these proceedings in the Ecclesiastical Courts was one which would in itself be a wrong upon the churchwardens, since its object was to make *them* tax their fellow parishioners, without it being at all clear that they had any power to do so.” *Lord Denman's judgment in the Braintree case.*

The Judge's remarks in “Oliver versus Wood.”

“Church rate,” the learned judge said, “was a legal obligation upon every one for divine worship.” The learned judge read Dr. Oliver's speech and among other remarks said he was by no means a perfect moralist, who gave up a law on account of the difficulty of enforcing it. Even the dissenter was not right as a moralist who gave up the law; he was not required to give up the exercise of his political right to obtain its alteration; but as long as it was law, he was bound to use persuasion to obey the law, not to resist it. Dr. Oliver gave up the right for a time, but although there might be a difficulty in enforcing the law, this was no justification in *foro conscientiæ*.—(*Extracted from the Wolverhampton Chronicle.*)

Lord Denman has also reaffirmed and acted upon this principle in the committal of Baines. The Lord Chancellor has done the same. Archdeacons Wilberforce and Musgrave have published in their charges, not only the law in this matter, but also the *measures* to be produced against those who resist it, as in the case of Baines.

It may be as well to state the nature of these measures, and to show that the refusal of a rate, or setting it aside for informality will not prevent these measures from being taken.

"But are we therefore to conclude, because those several means are inapplicable to bind the Parishioners to their duty, that there are no others more availing?"

I am fortified by the opinions of two eminent Civilians, whom I have separately consulted with a view to this Visitation, in saying that such is not the case.

Two modes are pointed out.

The ONE by *Articles* against any Individual Parishioner, for refusing to make, or concur in making, a rate—a *sufficient* rate; for the repairs, &c. required: a mode of proceeding like an indictment at common law for a misdemeanor, in the absence of any statutory sanction for enforcing what is enjoined or to restraining what is forbidden.

The OTHER is by a monition, to the Churchwardens to call a Vestry; and to the Parishioners to meet: which monition would be personally served on certain of the Inhabitants. "If they disobeyed, and shewed no sufficient cause, they would be in *contempt*. Their contempt would be signified into the Court of Chancery: and a writ would issue, by virtue of which they would be attached, and committed"—.....that so, as in parallel cases at common law, 'the collective body of the Parishioners might be reduced to obedience by proceedings against Individuals.'

These are the remedy, which not on any independent judgment of my own, but on the credit of more than one amongst the highest living authorities, I have felt myself officially bound to point out as applicable to the case of wilful, contumacious, refusal. Nor let it be supposed that this liability is escaped by what the Attorney General himself calls that "shallow device" of a twelve-months' adjournment. Such an adjournment, or *any* adjournment, with a clear intent to refuse a rate, is identical with refusing it, and punishable through the same process. Nor again is the Law to be evaded by one or more of the Churchwardens declining to join his brother officers in convening a Vestry. I am assured by the same high authorities as before that the Law is competent to its own vindication here: that we have but to *monish all* to join in the call, and *so article those who refuse*: a proceeding, which, duly carried out against one contumacious Individual, would expose the viciousness of a practice, so inconsistent with the duty of Churchwardens and their solemn declaration on entering office."

So much for the pretence of "*tender consciences*" that, according to Lord Denman's judgment, there is no law requiring the parishioners to repair the Church; and that if there be no law, they are not guilty of the transgression of resisting the Law. Of the honesty of this plea also let the people judge, when they remember that the resistance was commenced *before* Lord Denman's judgment was given.

SECTION III.

THE ROCHDALE CONTEST.

In this parish, from the year 1832, a vindictive and increasing opposition and agitation against the church has been carried on. Vexatious law suits, excitement and delusion of the populace, desecration of the Church, reviling the Vicar, mob outrages and intimidation, requiring even the interference of the military, and all the arts, *usually* indicating *sedition* and *ungodliness*, but here said to be those of *tender conscience*, had been constantly employed. Yet these *conscientious* persons had the effrontery to charge me with being the *disturber* of the parish. I obeyed and supported the law, they disobeyed and attempted to trample upon or evade it, and had done so for years. It is not necessary to shew the reader what sort of *conscience* that is, which for years endeavoured to *force* its own unlawful will by mob violence, fraud, evasion, and conspiracies, and then accuses them who defend the *law* and their *lawful* privileges by *peaceable means* and *argument*, with being the *cause* of disturbance! Had *Æsop* lived now, he would not have needed a *fable* to *illustrate* the reckless hypocrisy, which marks its

tyranny by a brazen forgery of crime, when it can find none. A *true story* would have done as well. Instead of the "*Wolf and the Lamb*" he might have given "*The Rochdale Tender Consciences and the Vicar!*"

At the end of January, 1840, I came into residence. The ministerial and factious press had greeted my appointment with the foulest abuse. The hint was intelligible. Whether the London Anti-church Societies sent supplies, or special instructions, to their agents at Rochdale, cannot be ascertained. But I soon perceived, that I was to be made a mark of political dissenting agitation. On every point, (even though wholly unconnected with religion,) a rancorous and systematic opposition was set up against me. Every attempt at conciliation was met with hostility and outrage. In proof of this I have publicly adduced facts, which it is not necessary to repeat.

The first contest, immediately connected with the Church, arose out of an attempt to appoint Churchwardens, who would *obstruct*, not *perform*, the duties of the office. This dishonest purpose, forwarded by the aforesaid dishonest practices of "*tender conscience*" was *too bad*. It was defeated.

The next step was a litigious appeal to the Quarter Sessions, with an avowed intention of raising every possible technical impediment, to intimidate the Churchwardens by *expence*.* It was

* While this was in the press, certain parties avowedly resisting Church rates are summoned. They appear before three

given out that the confederates were well *supplied with funds*. Again they failed—But they threaten to carry it to another court, the result is yet to be seen.

On the 10th of July, 1840, the Vestry was convened to grant a Church rate. Two dissenters called, before the day of meeting, on the Vicar, proposing that if the word "*optional*" were to be annexed to the collector's papers, and the rates were not to be *enforced* where parties were *unwilling* to pay it, the laying of the rate should not be opposed. The Vicar received them courteously, and stated that, though his opinion was against the proposed scheme, he would not hastily decide. He did consider it; and with great anxiety and desire to attain the peace it offered, if it could be gained without a sacrifice of duty. This could not be done. In declining to accede to the proposal, he felt it due

magistrates, all appointed under the influence of the present advisers of the Queen, sworn to protect the Church. All three had *personally assisted* in opposing the rate, which the law, they are appointed to dispense, holds to be the *bounden duty* of the Parishioners. These three in the teeth of a previous decision, to the contrary, by the bench under the same circumstances, and also of the usual practice in such cases at Petty sessions, dismissed the case. One gave as a reason, that one Churchwarden could not demand a rate or lay an information, but all must join. Another—that TEN Churchwardens were a corporation *sole*! and therefore the information should *state* that the rate was due to them *all*. The only Magistrate who remonstrated against this absurdity, was Mr. Royds, who *alone* was *not appointed* by the Whig Cabinet of defenders of the Church, and who had felt that the best way to *encourage obedience* to that law, which his *sovereign* entrusted him to dispense, was to set an *example of obeying it himself*. The person summoned may appeal, the Churchwarden may not. He is put to the expence of a Mandamus!

to both his parishioners and himself, to give the following statement of his reasons :—

ADDRESS.—Before I proceed to the business of the day, I feel it incumbent on me to notice a proposal, which was made to me, by Mr. * * *, and Mr. * *, to this effect, that certain parties would consent to the laying of a rate, provided that it was understood, that the term “optional” should be annexed to the papers delivered in by the collector. I am desirous, in the first instance, to offer my public acknowledgments and thanks to those gentlemen, for the expressions of personal kindness, and for the candour and good temper, with which they discussed the subject; and Mr. * * *, in his note addressed to me this morning, has given me reason to hope they did not perceive on my part, any want of desire to receive them in the same spirit. I consider it, moreover, due to them, to the importance of the subject, and to the parishioners at large, that I should not merely answer, “I cannot assent to your proposal,” but should frankly state some of my principal reasons. I have written these reasons, lest in the inadvertance of public speaking, I might express myself indistinctly, and be liable to be misunderstood, or misrepresented.

These gentlemen offered me certainly tempting inducements, in the confidence they felt, and the experience, which, they said had proved the beneficial operations of this plan, in some places. I will not raise a question upon this point, because the reasons I shall have to submit, do not depend on the probability of success or failure, of that plan. Neither will I urge the strong objections, which I could make to the voluntary system; because that course might give pain, and raise discussions foreign to the object of the meeting.

I CANNOT THEREFORE ADOPT THE PROPOSAL.

I. Because to lay a rate, and then make the collection *optional*, would be a contradiction in terms*—to build with one hand, and pull down with the other.

II. Because I *believe* and *preach*, unreserved and *unequivocal* obedience to the law, to be a christian duty; and cannot, therefore, *consistently* be a party to any *evasion* of that obedience, or to make public law bend to private opinion.

III. Because the plain, and acknowledged intention of the law (however easy it may be from the *imperfections* of its *provisions* for carrying out that intention, to evade or obstruct it) is—that the *parishioners generally* are bound to repair the

* “Quicunque vult” (optional) “is but an ill preface to a law; and it is a strange obligation that makes no difference between him that obeys, and him that refuses to obey.” Bishop Taylor.

Churches, and provide for the decent performance of Divine Service. Consequently to consent to the proposed measure, would be to consent to a quibble, to facilitate disobedience, or evasion of that law, which as Christians we are bound to obey, while it is law.

IV. Because I cannot surrender the principle; that a religious *national* establishment, for ever set aside for *national* use, ought to be maintained upon the same footing, as *every other* national establishment—whether civil or military—scientific or useful, by a *general* and *equal* charge upon the property of the Nation.

V. Because, while the proposal made requires of *me* the public surrender of those principles of Christian and National duty,—the payment of the rate does *not* call for *any* such sacrifice of principle on the part of *those*, who are favourable to the voluntary system. They may pay the rates, not because they *give up* their *own* opinion—but because it is the *law of the land*; and as Christians they feel it their duty to obey it, and not set up their private opinion against it, so long as it shall continue law.

VI. Because Church rate is a charge not upon *persons*, but upon *property*—not a tax *recently* put upon those, who separated from the Church—but a charge annexed long before such separation took place, from time immemorial, to *property generally*, pressing *equally*, in *proportion* to the value of rateable property—not making him who has much, and him who has little, pay *alike*; but the *larger* property pay *more*, and the *smaller* pay *less*.

VII. Because I have never seen any *scriptural* reason offered, in which it could be made a matter of *conscience*, not to pay it. If I purchased, rented, or inherited, property in *Turkey*, which, from time immemorial had been subject to a lawful charge, for the service and maintenance of a Mahometan Mosque, I should offer so much *less* purchase money or rent—or think the property of so much *less* value in proportion to the amount of this charge; but I should never think that there was *any* conscience in withholding the payment of a charge, to which my property was subject, because I am *not* a Mahometan. I need hardly observe, that this reasoning would apply more strongly, if possible, if the place for which my property was charged, happened to be a place of worship for Christians; from whom I *differed* only in *some* points, but with whom I *agreed* on many important points, especially *that the Bible is the word of God, and Christ Jesus, the only name whereby we may be saved.* This view of the liability of property, would not be affected by the circumstance of my having, as an individual, to contribute to a place of worship entirely suited to my views. It might be an inconvenience to me, that I could not use the public place of worship, but no reason for my withholding what had been lawfully appropriated to maintain it.

VIII. Because this charge on property does not preclude the use of *voluntary* means; while the *abolition* of the charge would withdraw the additional means of *national* contribution, for the supply of places of public worship, which are already far inadequate to the wants of our population,—notwithstanding the noble voluntary efforts of both Churchmen and Dissenters, in addition to the lawful provision.

IX. Because any such concession of mine would be unjust to my brother Clergy, and Churchmen, in other parts of the kingdom, where I am well satisfied that the plan purposed must be an utter failure, and if attempted, would be injurious to the *religious interests* of the whole community. I should be purchasing popularity to myself, and a hollow truce, at the expence of increasing *their difficulties*, and of undermining the religious advantages of the whole nation.

Upon these grounds, I find myself compelled to object to the proposal of Mr. * * * and Mr. * *, great as may be the temptation offered. I would most gladly purchase Peace and Union. It is my present hope and desire, please God, to live and die at Rochdale—to have my own interest, and the interests of those dearer to me than myself, interwoven and inseparably connected with the welfare of this Parish. I long to live upon those terms, upon which, as a fellow man, and especially as a minister of the gospel, I ought to desire to live with my neighbours. None can more earnestly thirst for peace and union, than I do. Most gladly would I earn your good opinion—but not by a course, by which I think that I should probably not long retain it, and know that I should *certainly* not deserve it, viz:—by doing that which I am convinced is wrong, for the sake of present expediency and popularity. I will gain you by an *honest straightforward* course, or not at all. Your favor, upon other terms, would not be, on your part, worth giving, nor on mine, worth receiving. Mr. * * * has frankly stated his intention of moving an amendment to the proposal for a Rate. But I will not despair of his being influenced by such important considerations, to alter his intention.

If I cannot convince you of the correctness of my views of Church Rates, I can at least, fairly call on you, as Christians, not to obstruct or evade the *manifest intention* of the law, as it now stands. If it can be *altered*, well and good. But as long as it is law, be subject to it, for *conscience sake*—for the sake of the peace and welfare of the Parish—and above all, for the sake of Him, who bids us render to all their dues; and to submit to every ordinance of man for the *Lord's sake*.

The highly respectable character of the Churchwardens appointed, and the amount of the Rate, will satisfy you that no abuse is intended. I shall leave the matter to the consideration

of all parties, hoping that moderation and good feeling will prevail over party spirit, and even induce some sacrifice of the stiffness of opinion, to the general good. *

J. E. N. MOLESWORTH.

I also particularly urged upon the opponents, that they need not compromise their objections to the *equity* of the Law of Church rate, by paying in *obedience* to the law, and under *protest* against its equity, a course which might satisfy the most scrupulous *conscience*. The appeal was vain ; a poll was demanded and took place. *Inflammatory* hand bills were put forth, *organized* committees were formed, by the anti-rate party ; while the friends of the Church had no committee, and seemed to leave matters to take their course. Large bodies of the anti-rate party poured in—and during the first three days they were in a majority of some hundreds. They were full of exultation, and *taunts*. They put out a bill boasting of their certainty of victory, calling on their adherents, to make the majority 1000—The Church party, all this time, offered *no outrage*, and shewed no signs of *ill temper*—all was *orderly*—But, whether from the illtimed crowing of the abolitionists, or from *shame* at seeing the Church *thus abandoned*, the friends of order, on the fourth day roused themselves, and gained so rapidly on their opponents, that they no longer talked of the “*thousand majority*,” but began to fear lest they should be in a minority.

* The names and notes, and some of the matter which appeared in the original address, are omitted—the former because unimportant, the latter, because the arguments are brought forward in the foregoing sections.

Then was exhibited the *different spirit* of the two parties, under defeat—Instead of leaving the poll to go on *fairly*, as the *Church* party had done while it was against them, the *Tender conscience* party began their *usual tactics*—A riotous assemblage was brought into the Church yard. Gangs of ruffians surrounded *infirm* persons, and *females* known to be *favourable* to the rate, and hustled and terrified them till they dared not approach to record their votes. Personation of voters, and all the meanest tricks were practised. But notwithstanding all these unlawful means of obstruction and imposition, the Church party continued every hour to gain ground, so that on the fifth day at the close of the poll, the Church party was only 66 behind. An extension of the time would probably have placed them at the head. However, as the Chairman had not in his *public notice reserved* (though he believes that, after those outrages, he might have lawfully assumed it) the power of extending the poll, he submitted to the injustice.

To undeceive those, who intended to take the Bible for the rule of their *conscience*, he published the following address.

How does the Bible direct Christians to fulfil the Law of the Land?—The plain intention of the Law is universally acknowledged to be that, the Parishioners are bound to maintain the Parish Church and to provide for the decent observance of Divine Service.

This Lord Denman expressly *declared*, when he gave his opinion that the Churchwardens cannot make a rate *by themselves*, without the Vestry—and this the very *existence* of the *office* of Churchwardens *clearly proves*. It is an *unlawful* and *unscriptural* pretence, that because the Churchwardens *by themselves*

cannot make a rate, therefore the Parishioners can be *justified*, as *loyal subjects and good Christians*, in *refusing* to grant a rate: when the *INTENTION* of the law is clear, that they ought to grant what is reasonably required for the decent observance of Divine worship.

This is easily proved from the Bible—

“Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s”—Matt. xxii. 21. This was the answer of JESUS, when asked, whether it was lawful to give tribute money to CÆSAR—He merely looked at the “superscription” to see to whom the *law allotted it*.—and then told them to pay it as the *law directed*.—Yet Cæsar was a *Heathen and Foreigner*. Would Jesus have advised his followers to withhold from *Christian Churches*, and their own Nation—tribute which the law had ordered, and which he advised them to pay to *Hellathens and Foreigners* in the same case?

How did Jesus act?

“Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money; that take, and give unto them for me and thee.” Matt. xvii. 27.

This tribute was the *half shekel* for the service of the Jewish Temple, *ordered* to be paid by *all* persons. Jesus as *Son of God*, might have pleaded, that he was free from all tribute to that temple. But rather than give offence he worked a miracle to pay it.

The Apostles followed the same course—

St. Paul.—“Wherefore ye must be subject not only for wrath, but for *conscience* sake.—For, for this cause, pay ye tribute also, for they are God’s Ministers attending continually on this very thing—Render therefore to all their dues: tribute, to whom tribute; custom, to whom custom.” Rom. xiii. 5. 6. 7.

St Peter.—“Submit yourselves to every *ordinance* of man, for the *Lords* sake.” 1. Pet. ii. 13.

And St. Paul gives this general rule for all honest Christians, in performing all their duties.—“Whatsoever ye do, do it *HEARTILY*, as to THE LORD, and not unto men.” Col. iii. 23.

If you obey the Law as the Lord directs and obey it “*heartily*” as “*to the Lord*”; you will obey it according to its plain *meaning and intention* and not try to quibble and shuffle it off, because it may not have provided means of *forcing* you to obey. There can be no “*conscience*” in such proceeding. What would you think of a man who took advantage of some quibble or defect in the law, to keep you out of money or property that belonged to you, and who then told you that the laws could not *force* him to pay, though he knew that they *intended* it to be yours—and that where there was “no law there was no transgression.” Would

you call that "rendering to all their dues"—and rendering obedience to the law "*heartily*" as "*to the Lord*"? You would be *ashamed* to act on such a principle in respect of *private* duties, do not think it can be right or *conscientious* to act upon it in public duties.

Do not be misled by agitators, to forget your Christian Duty and fight against God.—As long as the law is—"THAT PARISHIONERS ARE BOUND TO MAINTAIN THE PARISH CHURCHES"—Obey it for "*conscience sake*," obey it for "*the Lord's sake*"—obey it *cheerfully* and *honestly*, according to its plain meaning, without quibbling, pettifogging, or evasion of any kind,—obey it "*heartily*" as "*to the Lord*."

J. E. N. MOLESWORTH, *Vicar*.

As the majority against the rate had been obtained under the *circumstances* alluded to, the Churchwardens and the Vicar, having consulted with several most respectable Parishioners, proposed a second appeal to the parish, and also withdrew from the estimated expences some items, which were objected to. A Vestry was then called. The anti-rate party had been loud in their exultation, and proclaimed that the friends of the Church would never try again. Finding their mistake, they shewed the *temper* and *spirit*, with which, under the plea of *conscience*, they were actuated. They collected an immense rabble—several of these "*tender conscience*" persons directing them, to groan, and hiss, and hoot, in the CHURCH, the moment the Vicar attempted to speak; several stood upon the seats—others blasphemed in that hallowed place. One (it is to be hoped *thoughtless*) young man, whom the *tender consciences*, were pleased to honour as among their leaders and chief agents, jumped on a seat till he broke it; and when remonstrated with, replied

with vulgar blasphemy, and a wish that he could pull down the Church.* These, and various other brutalities, and sacrilegious performances, were part of the proceedings of "*Tender consciences*;" and displayed the nature of their *liberality*, which they boasted. After a scene of Uproar, more characteristic of savages than civilized beings; the meeting adjourned to the Church yard. A rate of a *half-penny* in the pound was proposed, and a counter amendment moved. The mover of the amendment was heard through a long string of appeals, such as demagogues make to the worst passions of the multitude—that the Church oppressed and robbed them—that the Church was to blame because the people chose to *resist* the law, and therefore the law, as in other cases of *resistance*, enforced a distress against the offender. The stale tricks of trumping up a scene about the seizure of a Bible, and of dragging a poor man's bed from under him were paraded in all their horrors, the sham and well paid Martyrdom of Thorogood was pathetically alluded to, the dreadful cruelty of the Church robbing a starving family of its bread was roared out, and received with cheers and yells by a set of partisans, who knew all the time

* It is too well known that this is neither fiction, nor exaggeration. The individual is the son of a quaker—and greatly is the Father of such a son to be pitied—But the Father by his vote (avowedly for *conscience* sake) supported the cause, of which the son thus illustrated the principles. If that Father would hear me as a friend, I would cite as a warning, may it not prove here prophetic—"He that soweth to the wind, shall reap the *whirlwind*."

that the landlord usually paid the rate, and that a poor man could not be called to pay above *two pence* or *three pence*, even if it were to fall upon him, instead of his landlord. When the Vicar, in reply, began to touch the fallacies of the speaker, his voice was immediately drowned, by the *liberal* followers of "*tender consciences*." A poll was demanded and granted. The only answer deemed necessary was the following address.

Reason and Principle against Passion and Prejudice.—In the course of the proceedings at the Vestry, one of the speakers thought fit to direct his observations to certain opinions of mine publicly declared, and more particularly to a paper headed "*How does the Bible direct Christians to fulfil the Law of the Land?*" He had a right, to do this, and also, if he pleased to appeal as he did, (and as on my suggesting the *weakness of the cause*, which it *showed*, he asserted he would do) to the *passions* of the people. He takes his course, I take mine—I will appeal to the *reason and religious principles* of the people, not to their passions. But as those, who heard him, refused to hear me—I take this means of pointing out the chief fallacies, by which he endeavoured to blind people to the *plain truths*, put forth in the paper above mentioned. He stated that the *intention of the law* that the Parishioners were bound to repair the Church, &c. was nowhere recognised by Statute—The truth is that the Statute "*circumspecte agatis*" so far back as the reign of Edward the *first*, not only distinctly *recognised* this duty of the parishioners, but authorised what was *then* a most heavy punishment to *compel* them to do *that* duty.* —The law has been continually acted upon in repeated decisions, and its intention is staring us in the face in the *lawful* existence of such officers as *churchwardens*. His other grand argument to blink the principles of Christian duty was that the Clergy, in several instances, violated these principles.—If he could have *proved* those instances how would that effect the duty of every *honest* man to act upon Christian principles; or the guilt of those who violate them. Two *blacks* will not make one *white*. If A. B. is charged with taking what belongs to D. it will not make *him* an honest man, to urge that E. did the *same*.

But in the cases cited the Clergy do obey the law, and especially in that of the first fruits, according to its intention, though it had its origin, not in the way which the speaker asserted, but in

* See Archdeacon Musgrave's excellent Charge.

what the Clergy feel to be a most despotic and unjust encroachment.

These were the only approaches, I could perceive to any thing like reasoning. The rest consisted of inflammatory appeals to the passions, and of stale tricks too often descended to by those, who in the heat of excitement lose sight of the duty of candid and upright men to support a righteous cause, by fair arguments. Against these devices I will set forth a few leading *cautions* for them who *seek truth*.

The Church Rate is a charge upon *property* not upon *persons*. It is an *equal* charge upon all the real property of the country.—It is not a charge on *dissenters*, but a charge annexed before dissent was known—and subject to which they took their property—It is a charge on the property of the *nation*, for religious edifices set aside for ever for the use of the *nation*:—devoted to a fixed purpose—not capable, as a meeting-house, of being sold, or made a matter of speculation, or converted to any use or any doctrines the owners may think fit. The Church Rate, *small as it is*, is paid in nine cases out of ten, not by the poor occupiers, but by the *landlords*.

Persons whose goods are seized for Church Rate, are no more persecuted than are those whose goods may be seized for *Poor Rate*, for *Rent*, for *Debt*, and for refusing to pay *any other lawful demand*. It is easy to put forward the *Bible* to be seized, and then get up a *stage scene*, to exasperate the passions and blind the judgment of the ignorant—It is a trick which has been got up again and again by the movers of agitation against the Church—I have myself exposed it years ago—It is a barefaced imposture practised on the people—Thorogood's is an affair of the same kind, he was committed not for Church Rate, but for *contempt of court*; under *not his own judgment*, but the directions of those who wanted to raise a cry of persecution.

The plea that a man may *evade* the *intention* of the law, because he can, by pettifogging tricks, escape its *penalties*, would be convenient for all manner of dishonesty. It would be a good rule for rogues and swindlers, but a bad one for real Christians.

I now only request the people to read the answers I have before printed, pointing out from the *Bible* the duty of a *Christian*; and to ask themselves calmly and before only their God, whether those answers be, or be not *truth*. Let them act as their conscience will tell them they ought to do. I repeat I will not appeal to their passions—In appealing to their *reason* or *religious principles*, let any cause, I take in hand, stand, or fall,—My duty will have been done, the result is at the disposal of Providence.

J. E. N. MOLESWORTH, VICAR.

P. S. It has been asked why the Churchwardens exercise *their right of demanding another Poll*. It is their duty—and it is *notorious*, that at the late Poll the grossest frauds were practised.

When I granted the poll, warned by the unfair means, taken on the last occasion, to obstruct the voters, I publicly *reserved* the power of extending the poll, in case any similar arts should be resorted to.

It soon became evident, what practices would be resorted to. On former occasions most of the overseers attended; and, if any discussion arose about the right of rate payers to have their voting ticket, an appeal was made to the chairman; and the chairman, in any difficulty or attempt at fraud, could refer to the overseers. But the anti-rate party, without communicating with the chairman, or even informing him, *took upon themselves* to make a new arrangement, and influenced the select vestries of the townships, to compel the absence of the overseers. The purpose of this was obvious. The voters for the rate found every impediment thrown in the way of getting their tickets, and many, in despair, abandoned the attempt. The consequence was visible—on the first day the majority of anti-rate voters was nearly 700. I declared that, if this scandalous conduct was persisted in, I would issue chairman's tickets, independently of the overseers, to those who could prove their right to vote. On the second day a better chance was given to those in favor of the church, and the result of fairer play was, that they rapidly reduced the majority against *them*. But still impediments were thrown in their way, and towards the hour of five, when the poll

usually closed, information was brought to me of the obstruction of voters, and that numbers who came from a *distance* to record their votes, were wearied with the difficulties and could not do so, unless more time were given. I extended the poll one hour; this had the effect of checking the systematic impediments thrown in the way of voters, and the rate party gained the lead; but both struggled with alternate success till the fifth day, which was to be the last of the poll. Towards three o'clock, on that day, large bodies of workmen, whose employers were against the rate, were turned out an hour before the usual time. And from that period, a *systematic*, and *organized* obstruction and intimidation, of the voters for the rate, was perceptible. If a carriage came up, with anti-rate colours, an opening was immediately made for it; but if carriages with voters in favor of the rate came, they were stopped, attempts were made to overturn them, traces were cut, and one carriage dragged back. It was with the greatest difficulty that the police could obtain an approach for them, or save the people from severe injury. Ruffians banded together, *knocked down* several of the church rate party, tore their clothes, kicked them most savagely, and terrified many so, that nothing but the greatest zeal could have induced voters to encounter such danger. (All this, be it observed, was done by the "*tender conscience*" party; they cannot produce a *single instance*, of supporters of the rate, illtreating

any of their opponents). It was impossible for the voters to get up in time, when so obstructed. I deemed this a fit occasion to again use the power I had reserved, and which, repeatedly during the poll, I declared *publicly* I would exercise, to prevent the voters, *whatever* their *opinions*, from being bullied, or defrauded, out of their right of voting according to those opinions. I extended the poll one hour, but I believe, notwithstanding the assertions of the opponents to the contrary, that when the poll was so adjourned, the church rate party were *in a decided majority*. At this the rage of the *liberals* and the "*tender consciences*" knew no bounds. The riot became more fierce, and, to prevent bloodshed, the military were called out. It has been stated, that the military immediately retired, upon the order of one of the *liberal* magistrates, who said they were called out unnecessarily. This was one of the many false statements made, for the use and comfort of "*tender consciences*." The military moved to a spot *close at hand*, under the direction of *their officer*, who *alone could* direct their movements, when the riot act had been read; and who did this according to the *standing directions* for such occasions. At the close of the poll, at which above 13,000 votes were recorded, a majority of 113 was declared for the rate, and another hour would, apparently, have more than doubled that *majority*, as the presence of the soldiers cleared the *way* for the voters, and repressed the outrages of *the rioters*.

I acknowledge gladly the aid of many dissenters, whose christian zeal raised them above sectarian jealousy and intolerance; and shall conclude with some truly christian sentiments, of an old divine, addressed to legislators, who, as well as himself, had *bitter experience* of the miseries, and crimes, arising from disobedience against laws, under the pretence of "TENDER CONSCIENCE."

"So long as you make religion your care, and holiness your measure, you will not think that authority is the more to be despised, because it is in the hands of the church; or that it is a sin to 'speak evil of dignities,' unless they be ecclesiastical, but that these may be reviled; and that though nothing is baser than for a man to be a thief, yet sacrilege is no dishonour; and indeed, to be an oppressor is a great and crying sin, yet to oppress the church, to diminish her rents, to make her beggarly and contemptible, that is no offence; and that though it is not lawful 'to despise government,' yet if it be church-government, that then the case is altered. Take heed of that; for then God is dishonoured, when any thing is the more despised, by how much it relates nearer unto God.

"In the same proportion, you are to take care of all inferior relatives of God and of religion. Find out methods to relieve the poor, to accommodate and well dispose of the cures of souls, let not the churches lie waste and in ruinous heaps, to the diminution of religion, and the reproach of the Nation, lest the Nations abroad say, that the Britons are a kind of Christians that have no churches; for churches, and courts of judicature, and the public defences of an imperial city, are 'res sacræ;' they are venerable in law, and honourable in religion.

"To conclude. If every one in this honourable assembly would join together, to promote christian religion, in its true notion, that is, peace and holiness, the love of God and the love of our brother, christianity in all its proper usefulness, and would not endure for the nation any thing against the laws of the holy Jesus; if they were all zealous for the doctrines of righteousness, and impatient of sin, in yourselves and in the people, it is not to be imagined what a happy nation we should be. But if ye divide into parties, and keep up useless differences of names or interests; if ye do not join in the bands of peace, that is, the *king and the church*, religion and the good of the nation, you can never hope to see a blessing to be the end of your labours."—*Bishop Taylor.*





